

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Ed Whitfield**  
**Subcommittee on Energy and Power**  
**Hearing on “The American Energy Initiative: A Focus on**  
**H.R. 4255, the ‘Accountability in Grants Act of 2012’”**  
**September 11, 2012**  
*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

I am pleased that we are here today considering what should be a non-controversial bill, the “Accountability in Grants Act of 2012.”

This bipartisan bill would prohibit EPA from funding certain foreign programs, projects, or activities under the Clean Air Act.

This bill is limited in scope and applies only to grants and other financial assistance under Section 103 of the Clean Air Act, which authorizes the administrator to undertake certain research, investigation, and training.

This bill does not impact any other provision of law, including those invoked for humanitarian aid and emergency assistance. Foreign aid is another issue that could be discussed at a later date, but those efforts are properly handled by the State Department – not EPA.

I introduced this bill in response to what we learned from a 2011 letter to EPA asking for a list of grants awarded by EPA pursuant to Section 103 of the Clean Air Act. What I have found from EPA’s response and the committee’s further inquiries has surprised me. I found examples such as:

- \$141,450 to China to study swine manure.
- \$305,849 to the Science and Technology center in the Ukraine to re-train former Newly Independent States (NIS) weapons scientists.
- \$180,000 to train Polish municipalities on landfill gas.
- Over \$400,000 to Indonesia for the “Breathe Easy Jakarta” program supporting urban air quality management.
- \$1,226,841 for the United Nations to promote clean fuels.

A May 2011 Congressional Research Service study reported on the amount of U.S. foreign assistance given in Fiscal Year 2010, by sector, to countries holding more than \$10.0 billion in U.S. debt. These countries included China, Brazil, and Russia.

According to CRS, these countries collectively received millions of dollars in foreign assistance in 2010 from U.S. agencies for the environmental sector alone. At the same time, these countries are some of our largest creditors. As of June of this year, China alone holds more than \$1.1 trillion in U.S. treasury securities. This data is concerning, especially when considering that the United States national debt now exceeds \$16 trillion and is spiraling out of control.

We can’t maintain our roads, bridges and domestic programs, but yet we have money to give China to study swine manure. Something doesn’t smell right in this situation.

To be fair, this type of spending wasn’t started by President Obama, but President Obama has exacerbated the problem. I have records going back as far as 2001, supplied to the committee by EPA, showing that since that time the EPA has spent approximately \$140 million in its foreign grant programs. Of this amount, nearly \$50 million was awarded in Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 alone.

I’m sure that the other side is going to say that this bill guts the Clean Air Act, that this money creates jobs, or that curbing foreign EPA grants will do nothing to solve our debt problems. But I would argue that we have to start somewhere if we intend to dig ourselves out of the mountain of debt we currently have.

I might also add that even if you don't want to limit EPA's foreign authority, I hope we can all agree that this money would be better spent building a new bridge, finishing a dam, or directly improving environmental quality with projects right here in the United States, so that we can grow our economy here at home rather than overseas.

The American people sent us to Washington to clean things up and this is just one example of where we can all agree -- that this money should be spent here at home rather than in China or Indonesia.

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